



# South Carolina River News

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## River Management

### Land and water stewardship: taking action to protect resources

One of the primary goals of the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program is to build and maintain a land ethic or stewardship among river users and riparian landowners — to instill or rekindle a set of values for land management that will result in the protection of our river resources. The classic definition of a land ethic was given to us by Aldo Leopold, the famous outdoorsman and author, who wrote:

*"All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for a place in the community, but his ethics prompt him also to cooperate. The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land."*

The motivation for stewardship comes from familiarity and respect for the resource. The steward is convinced that his/her actions will benefit him/her, the resource, and future generations. An important part of stewardship is knowing what actions to take.

If you are a river user — boater, canoeist, fisherman, hunter, swimmer, bird watcher — there are several things you can do to help protect the resource: keep the river and shoreline clean from trash and debris, be courteous to other river users, and respect private property. When you are not on the river, remember that rainfall runoff from your landlocked neighborhood drains to some lake, river, or stream. This means that activities in your backyard can affect water quality in the river where you fish and swim.

River-bordering landowners have an increased responsibility because any activity on their property can have a direct and immediate impact on the river. For example, logging to the riverbank can result in streambank erosion and increased water temperatures (by removing shade). Sediment in the water is not very appealing to the eye, and it can also have harmful effects on fisheries. Wise land management goes hand in hand with river management.

The South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program has developed a special program for riparian landowners along state-designated scenic rivers that consists of two components: education and wise land management. The new Scenic Rivers Stewardship Program offers landowners four voluntary land management options including land registration, a memoran-

dum of agreement, a conservation easement, and donation of land.

A landowner may choose to register river-bordering land in the Scenic Rivers Land Registry. Land registration involves a simple, written agreement between the landowner and the Scenic Rivers Program whereby the landowner pledges to manage his/her land in concert with scenic river goals, give notice of any change in land ownership or major change in land use, and report any known threats to the resource. Land registration is similar to joining a landowner association for a lake or subdivision — it brings everyone together with a common goal to protect the resource.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA), signed by the landowner and the Scenic Rivers Program, outlines management guidelines for property under the agreement. Thus, the MOA provides a model for the landowner to follow and allows for technical guidance from program staff. Guidelines in a MOA might include establishment and

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*The scenic Broad River at historic Smith's Ford*

# Sustainable forestry makes economic and environmental sense

By Ken Hill, Willamette Industries

Representing more than 400 companies and trade associates, the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) accounts for 95 percent of the United States' paper production, 65 percent of the solid wood production, and 90 percent of the industrial forest land. AF&PA is working on a new program that will address an old and worrisome question — Can our forest land provide quality products on a continuing basis without an economic and/or environmental system breakdown?

The Association's efforts have resulted in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), a program designed to ensure that future generations have the same abundant forests we enjoy today. To develop SFI, the AF&PA assembled a task force of experienced, professional foresters. Their 18-month collaboration resulted in an ambitious set of principles for sustainable forestry and detailed forest management guidelines. These principles and guidelines act as a road map for the best way to manage forests for today and tomorrow.

Through SFI, forest companies and allied groups commit themselves to a code of conduct that goes far beyond prevailing practices. In 1996, compliance with SFI will be required as a condition of membership in the AF&PA. Participating companies will reforest land promptly after harvesting timber, provide for wildlife habitat, improve water quality and ecosystem diversity, and protect land of ecological significance. The program applies to lands owned by forest companies, but it also promotes sustainable forestry on other ownerships from the public's National Forests to the small, family-owned woodlands that comprise most of the nation's forested land.

The SFI is based on **stewardship** — real, measurable actions — that signify the industry's progress in meeting the sustainable forestry objectives. With broad participation among AF&PA members, the program will ensure the continued economic viability of our forests while conserving the soil, air and water quality, wildlife and fish habitat, and aesthetics. ■

*Stewardship continued from page 1*

maintenance of a forested streamside buffer or observance of a setback from the water's edge for future buildings.

Both land registration and a memorandum of agreement are voluntary, non-binding agreements with no legal enforceability. In essence, they are sealed with the shaking of hands and kept by the good faith of the landowner and the Scenic Rivers Program. In most cases, they offer a high degree of protection for the resource. However, the protection is limited because land ownership changes over time.

The third option under the Scenic Rivers Stewardship Program is a conservation easement, a legally recorded land management agreement between the landowner and the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program. Just like land registration or a MOA, a conservation easement is a voluntary agreement; however, it is legally enforceable. A conservation easement revolves around land management guidelines. Program staff meet with the landowner once per year to provide technical assistance and monitor property for compliance.

To many landowners, the idea of a conservation easement seems too restrictive. However, a conservation easement is written to accommodate the specific wishes and intent of the landowner. An easement can allow the landowner great flexibility in the future use of property. For example, the same restrictions might not apply to an entire piece of property. Conservation easements can also allow for continuation of existing land uses such as farming or logging — so long as best management practices are followed.

Granting of a conservation easement requires a long-term commitment to stewardship on the part of the landowner. The agreement is **forever**. This is not to say that changes can't be made in the future with the consent of both parties. However, the agreement is intended to protect the river through appropriate land management in perpetuity. In return for this high level

## Landowner and River User Education



Wise land and water management requires a thorough understanding of the resource. Above, members of the Lynches Scenic River Advisory Council learn about water quality monitoring from Sam Munnerlyn, S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control.

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of commitment, the landowner can take great pride in the fact that future generations will be able to maintain and enjoy traditional uses of the land and water. Another benefit may include tax reductions for the landowner.

The final land management option available to riparian landowners through the Scenic Rivers Stewardship Program is donation of land. If landowners choose, they may grant title of their land to the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program. This option requires the land to be managed according to strict protection guidelines affording a high level of protection for the river. Land donation is a large step for a landowner — it also places an increased level of responsibility on the Scenic Rivers Program. There are cases, however, when land donation makes great practical sense, such as when a landowner has no heir and desires for the land to be managed for river protection beyond his or her lifetime.

Through the Scenic Rivers Program, river users and landowners are encouraged to adopt and practice a land ethic. The steward realizes, as did Aldo Leopold, that a land ethic does not prevent the use of our natural resources. Rather it affirms their right to a continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state. ■



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## River People

# Landowners have stake in river management

*By Diana Daughtridge*

In the everlasting interaction between the Catawba River and humanity, there exists a relationship that, like all relationships, involves privilege and responsibility. For those of us who are landowners on the Catawba watershed, there is a special element of privilege, for we are entrusted with the actual ownership of land that joins the river in a unique “marriage.” We enjoy the closeness of everyday exchange with the river. From our own land, we can cast a fishing line, launch a boat, build a pier, or observe the myriad of wildlife lured by the Catawba River.

With that special element of privilege comes an extra measure of responsibility for proper stewardship. If we are to do our part in maintaining and/or improving the quality of the river, we must accept the challenge to educate ourselves and others about the negative impact our daily actions might create, especially in terms of adding to the river’s nonpoint source pollution.

We must learn and implement practices needed to prevent erosion, siltation, and

runoff. Household and/or lawn chemicals and pesticides must be limited and controlled. Landowners should be leaders in the battle against litter and for recycling. Because of our proximity to the river, we are prime candidates to assist with voluntary monitoring projects. We need to join citizens’ groups that will keep us informed of problems and progress in terms of the health of the river. Such groups can also provide a means by which we can have a voice in encouraging policy makers to implement and enforce regulations that reflect a proper balance of river use and protection.

Wise landowners will respect the privilege/responsibility relationship that exists between them and the river, and they will help others to see that their relationship with the river is also one of privilege and responsibility. If we don’t, we all stand to lose, and perhaps it is the landowners who stand to lose the most. ■

*Reprint from Catawba River Corridor Plan*

## Program Manager's Corner

*By Barry Beasley*

South Carolinians have a strong sense of place and a great appreciation for the magnificent beauty of our natural environment. This deep-seated appreciation for our natural world has manifested itself into a sense of stewardship among many landowners in South Carolina. This stewardship has resulted in a demonstrated land ethic among individuals who own or manage our forests, farm fields, wetlands, and riparian lands.

Our hope in maintaining the natural beauty of our land and water, and the life it supports, is in our ability to work together to expand and enhance this stewardship ethic. In instances this will continue to require regulations. However, in programs such as the Scenic Rivers Stewardship Program, this goal can be

accomplished through cooperation and education, utilizing the resources of the state and the wisdom of landowners.

Nancy Newall, the poet and conservationist stated, “Conservation is humanity caring for the future.” To me, this definition of conservation is also the essence of a stewardship ethic. As resource managers and landowners, we must work cooperatively to manage rivers and riparian lands. The late Supreme Court Justice and outdoorsman, William O. Douglas called rivers, “Choice national assets reserved for all the people.” Through efforts such as the Scenic Rivers Stewardship Program we can use cooperative approaches and education to make sure we leave a “green legacy” for future generations. ■



## River Currents

Watch for **new signs at road crossings of South Carolina's state-designated scenic rivers**: Broad River (Cherokee and York counties), Little Pee Dee (Horry and Marion counties), Lower Saluda (Lexington and Richland counties), and Lynches (Darlington, Florence, Lee, and Sumter counties). The blue and white signs will alert passersby to the rivers' special status.

The **Black River Canoe & Kayak Trail** was officially inaugurated in June 1995. Extending nearly 80 miles through Williamsburg and Georgetown counties, the trail begins at Gilland Park in Kingstree and ends north of Georgetown at Highway 701. The trail includes interpretive signs, which were provided by **Westvaco**. Upper reaches of the trail in Williamsburg County are suitable for intermediate to experienced paddlers with the lower reaches being suitable for beginners. A brochure will be available soon. For more information, contact Ron Wofford, **Georgetown County Parks and Recreation Department**, 546-2481.

The **Lower Saluda River Advisory Council** is stepping-up its activity in 1995. Four working committees have been established to deal with perennial river issues: improving user safety, providing high quality public access, maintaining or improving water quality, and influencing land stewardship to conserve scenic and natural values. Completing a conservation easement agreement with **South Carolina Electric and Gas Company (SCE&G)** is the first order of business on the lower Saluda. The proposed SCE&G easement will pertain to a 100-foot riparian corridor along almost six miles of riverfront.

The 15 citizen-based expert committees of the **Edisto River Basin Project** have completed their evaluations of the basin's natural, cultural, and economic resources and written preliminary management recommendations. Their goal is to maintain the region's resources while improving its economic well-being. On July 26, members of the Basin Task Force, the project's ultimate decision makers, conducted the first of a series of

meetings to make final recommendations for inclusion in the management plan. The public is encouraged to participate and are welcome to all meetings. For more information, contact Barry Beasley, Department of Natural Resources, Water Resources Division, 737-0800.

The sixth annual **Beach Sweep/River Sweep** will be held on Saturday, September 16 from 9:00 A.M. to NOON. Cleanups will be held on rivers and lakes across the state. Everyone is welcome to participate. Call Becky Rideout at 737-0800 for more information.

A good example to follow for **Beach Sweep/River Sweep '95** comes from **The City of Greenville** and **Friends of the Reedy River**. The 1994 Sweep of the Reedy River was officially cancelled due to rain — thanks to great publicity beforehand, 56 people showed up anyway! They cleaned 82 bags of trash and 120 tires from the river. **Now that's volunteer spirit!** ■

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